

# INTRODUCTION

Whether you want to browse the web, manage your finances or listen to music, a notebook enables you to do it wherever you want.

This month we've gathered together six notebooks from top manufacturers that cost less than £500 including VAT, and put each one through a series of demanding tests. Whether you want a notebook for work, education or general home use, we'll help you pick the perfect portable computer.



**seth@computershopper.co.uk**

For just £500 you can get a notebook PC that's perfect for home or the new school year. We test six bargain laptops

# NOTEBOOK BARGAINS

# Choosing a... Budget Notebook

Despite having identical specifications, though, the displays are not all equal. Our demanding image tests showed that while no display is perfect, some are far better than others. We've included information on display quality in every review. A decent display should be a priority for everyone, and a good one is essential if you plan to do photo editing or graphics work.

The first things we check when reviewing a notebook are its keyboard and touch pad. A good keyboard and touch pad can make using a computer more enjoyable, and if either one is poor, everyday tasks can become frustrating. There's no way to judge the quality of these items without actually using them, so check our reviews to see which are particularly good or bad.

All the notebooks here include a 15.4in widescreen display with a native resolution of 1,280x800 pixels. This type of display is suitable for most tasks, although you may find yourself a little short of space when using complex applications such as a video-editing suite. The widescreen aspect ratio makes them ideal for watching

Despite costing less than £500 including VAT, every notebook here has a dual-core processor. This means they can handle multiple tasks at the same time, as they do in our multi-application benchmark, or concentrate both processing cores on a single task, as with our video-encoding benchmark. To benefit from both cores, you'll need applications that are optimised for dual-core chips, but most recent video-editing applications are designed this way. Of course, not all dual-core processors are equal, and you can see the relative power of each by checking our application benchmark scores on page 78.

Having a fast processor is only useful if you have plenty of memory. Fortunately all the notebooks here





have at least 1GB of memory, so they can run multiple web browsers and office applications in Windows Vista without a hitch. Fujitsu Siemens' Amilo has 2GB of RAM, making it particularly capable when dealing with large files.

### GAME OFF

Sadly, at this low price some sacrifices must be made, and none of the notebooks here is suitable for playing 3D games. Only two could even complete our 3D benchmark, and both did so with extremely low frame rates that leave the game unplayable.

Like many inexpensive computers, these notebooks have integrated graphics chipsets that use a part of the computer's main memory. When testing Acer's and Evesham's notebooks we had to reduce the amount of memory used by the graphics chip in order to get reasonable performance; the graphs on page 78 show the speeds we measured after this change.

### DISK JOCKEY

If you intend to use your notebook to store media files, you'll need a big hard disk. All the notebooks here can store at least 100GB of data. If you plan to store lots of video, consider PC Nextday's and Evesham's notebooks, as they include even larger 160GB disks.

Even the largest hard disk is bound to fill up eventually, however. Every notebook in this

month's test includes a DVD writer that can burn data to all popular types of optical media. You can buy single-layer writable DVDs in bulk for as little as 12p each, making archives and backups simple and inexpensive.

### PORT AUTHORITY

Every notebook in this review has several USB2 ports. These are ideal for connecting devices such as printers, scanners, hard disks, digital cameras, mice and keyboards, so it's always

## This month

**ACER TravelMate**  
**5520-5A1G12**

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useful to have as many as possible. All the notebooks here provide either three or four USB2 ports.

Expansion card slots are useful for adding extra capabilities to your notebook, such as 3G internet access or TV tuners. They come in two types: ExpressCard and CardBus. ExpressCard is the newer standard, but there are more cards available for the older CardBus standard. Our table on page 81 shows which slots each notebook offers.

## Version therapy Vista Home Premium and Basic

All the notebooks in our test this month come with Windows Vista, so you'll benefit from its improved file searching and security. Not all the notebooks have the usual Windows Vista Home Premium edition, though, as some manufacturers have economised by including the cheaper Basic edition. Vista Basic is a good operating system, but it lacks several of the features found in the Premium version.

The most visible advantage of Home Premium is the Aero desktop. This gives you attractive translucent menu bars and the fancy, if not particularly useful, Flip 3D task selector. You also get Live Thumbnails, so

when you hover your mouse over an application on the taskbar, a window pops up showing a live preview of the application.

Vista Home Premium includes Windows Media Center. This allows you to browse your media files more easily, and if you add a TV tuner, you can use its excellent electronic programme guide. You also get the Scheduled Backup tool, which backs up your files regularly without prompting.

Fortunately, both versions include Windows Mobility Center. This gathers a number of useful notebook-related tools, such as wireless networking and battery status, into one easy-to-access toolbar.



## ACER TravelMate 5520-5A1G12

★★★★★

£453 inc VAT

Despite being the cheapest notebook here, Acer's TravelMate looks and feels expensive.

### FEATURES

The TravelMate's graphite-coloured chassis looks smart and businesslike. It's very sturdy and resisted our attempts to flex it, so internal components are well protected. The keyboard and touch pad are a pleasure to use.

There are lots of expansion options around the chassis: four USB ports, a FireWire port and both CardBus and ExpressCard/54 expansion slots. The built-in memory card reader supports all the common card formats.

The 120GB hard disk provides adequate storage and comes with Windows Vista Home Premium on it, so you can use Windows Media Center to browse your video, photo and audio files. The TravelMate's speakers are the best in the group. You'll still want separate speakers for playing music, but for listening to the news or watching videos on the web, they'll suffice.

The display is the brightest here, and is capable of a clean, evenly lit white. It fared less well in our challenging greyscale and colour tests, but it's still the best display in the group.

### PERFORMANCE

The TravelMate is let down by its AMD Turion 64 X2 TK-53 processor, which couldn't keep up with the Intel chips in the other notebooks. It came last in our application benchmarks with an overall score of 102. It's still quick enough to run Windows Vista smoothly, and will deal well with everyday tasks, but it'll be noticeably slower than the others when editing photos or video. The battery lasted for two hours and 10 minutes in our light-use test, making it unsuitable for regular mobile use.

### VERDICT

The TravelMate is excellently designed and well equipped. If you don't want to take on tough computing tasks, it's a good choice.

### SUMMARY

- ✓ Good display and speakers
- ✓ Plenty of ports
- ✗ Poor application performance

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK AMD Turion 64 X2 TK-53, 1GB RAM, 120GB disk, ATI Mobility Radeon X1250 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.9kg  
PART CODE LX.TKTOX.025  
SUPPLIER [www.technoworld.com](http://www.technoworld.com)  
DETAILS [www.acer.co.uk](http://www.acer.co.uk)



## EVESHAM Voyager C350

★★★★

£499 inc VAT

Despite its name, the Voyager isn't particularly suited to a life on the open road.

### FEATURES

The Voyager's chassis is built like a tank, and it feels very strong with no flexing or creaking. It comes with an onsite warranty, and Evesham's technical support line is open on Saturdays.

The number of ports isn't so impressive, though. It has four USB2 ports and an ExpressCard/54 slot, but no FireWire port or memory card reader. The keyboard is fairly good and doesn't flex when you hit the keys.

Like all the notebooks here the Voyager has a 15.4in widescreen display with a resolution of 1,280x800 pixels. It's capable of a bright, clean white and has good contrast, but our greyscale transition test showed heavy and irregular banding, so it's not ideal for editing photos.

Evesham has fitted a large 160GB hard disk, so you'll have plenty of space for media files. Sadly, the Voyager runs Windows Vista Home Basic, so Windows Media Center isn't included. The software package includes Microsoft Works, however, which provides simple word processing and spreadsheet applications that are compatible with Microsoft Office.

### PERFORMANCE

The Voyager's Intel Pentium Dual Core T2080 processor runs at a respectable 1.73GHz but was considerably slower than the 1.73GHz Intel Core 2 Duo T5300 in the Fujitsu Siemens Amilo. An overall score of 107 in our application benchmarks shows that it's quick enough to run everyday tasks with ease, but there are faster notebooks here. The battery lasted a reasonable two-and-a-half hours in our light-use test. Like most of the notebooks here, it failed to run our 3D benchmark.

### VERDICT

The Voyager isn't particularly quick and is short of ports, but we like its sturdy case and onsite warranty. If you don't need a powerful notebook, though, the Acer is better value.

### SUMMARY

- ✓ Good warranty; big hard disk
- ✗ Windows Vista Basic
- ✗ Poor application performance

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Pentium Dual Core T2080, 1GB RAM, 160GB disk, VIA Chrome9 HC IGP graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.9kg  
PART CODE VOYC350AUG07  
SUPPLIER Evesham 08701 609500  
DETAILS [www.evesham.com](http://www.evesham.com)



## FUJITSU SIEMENS Amilo Li 1718

★★★★★

£499 inc VAT

This Fujitsu Siemens notebook is only available from Tesco, so you could pick one up while doing your weekly shop.

### FEATURES

The Amilo's chassis looks plain in a pleasingly simple way. The keyboard flexes a little as you type, but the keys provide a nice amount of resistance to cushion your keystrokes. The touch pad is big, so you have plenty of space to move your finger about, but the buttons beneath aren't clicky enough.

The Amilo has very few ports. There's no memory card reader or FireWire port, and no CardBus or ExpressCard expansion slots either. It does have four USB2 ports, though.

The hard disk has a capacity of 120GB and comes with Windows Vista Home Premium installed. Microsoft Works is also included, and is ideal for simple office tasks. The basic one-year warranty is supplemented by telephone support that's also open on Saturdays.

### PERFORMANCE

The Amilo's Intel Core 2 Duo T5300 processor is one of the fastest here, with only the Zoostorm's T7100 outperforming it in our video benchmark. It came second overall in our application benchmarks with an excellent score of 132, and is a decent choice if you need to perform tough tasks. It's fitted with 2GB of memory, too, which will come in handy during tasks such as video editing.

The Amilo was one of only two notebooks here to complete our 3D benchmark, but its score of 2.2fps shows that, like the others, it's not suitable for gaming. Its battery ran for two hours and seven minutes in our light-usage test, so it's not much good for mobile use.

### VERDICT

The Amilo is a powerful budget notebook with plenty of RAM, but PC Nextday's Zoostorm is faster with a bigger hard disk and a better battery. If you want one, though, be sure to buy soon as Tesco has a limited stock.

### SUMMARY

- ✓ Fast in applications
- ✓ Plenty of RAM
- ✗ Not many ports

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core 2 Duo T5300, 2GB RAM, 120GB disk, ATI Radeon XPress 200M graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.7kg  
PART CODE CUZ:N-GBR-VARIO16  
SUPPLIER Tesco 0845 600 4411  
DETAILS [www.fujitsu-siemens.co.uk](http://www.fujitsu-siemens.co.uk)





## HI-GRADE Notino W5700P



£499 inc VAT

Hi-Grade's Notino is a shocking shade of pink. It won't be to everyone's taste, but it makes a change from the usual black and silver plastic.

### FEATURES

The Notino attracted the attention of almost every visitor to our lab this month, but we didn't meet anyone who actually wanted to own it. Fortunately for those who don't like violent pink, it's also available in silver.

Whichever colour you choose, the Notino's chassis is rather boxy and ugly. It doesn't feel very tough, either, and flexes under pressure. The white keyboard doesn't really match the pink plastic and is rather cramped, with very small punctuation keys. The Notino has only three USB2 ports, no FireWire ports and no PC Card or ExpressCard expansion slots.

The display is capable of a fairly bright and clean white screen. At first we thought it had a reddish hue, but we soon realised that the pink notebook itself was reflecting on to the glossy display. Like most of the displays here it performed poorly in our more demanding tests, though, with colours that lack vibrancy. The Notino uses Windows Vista Basic, so you don't get any fancy features such as Media Center.

### PERFORMANCE

The Notino uses an Intel Core Duo T2250 processor. Like the Pentium Dual Core chip in Evesham's Voyager it runs at 1.73GHz, but it has twice as much cache memory. For some reason this extra cache made little difference in our benchmarks, and the Notino scored just 107 overall in our application benchmarks.

At two hours and 36 minutes the Notino's battery life is the best in the group, but it's still not good enough for regular mobile use.

### VERDICT

The Notino's bold colour scheme is unusual, and its battery life is marginally better than those of the other notebooks here. It's not very powerful, though, and with Windows Vista Basic and few ports, it's not a great buy.

### SUMMARY

- ✓ Pink
- ✗ Poor application performance
- ✗ Windows Vista Basic; few ports

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core Duo T2250, 1GB RAM, 120GB disk, VIA Chrome9 HC IGP graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.9kg  
PART CODE VA250D  
SUPPLIER Hi-Grade 020 8532 6112  
DETAILS [www.higrade.com](http://www.higrade.com)



## MSI VR600-048UK



£492 inc VAT

MSI has managed to squeeze a numeric keypad into a notebook no larger than the others here.

### FEATURES

The VR600's numeric keypad is useful if you enter a lot of figures, but it creates difficulties when typing. Vital keys such as Shift, Enter and backspace have been shrunk to make room, and this can make typing rather hit and miss. The touch pad is big, however, and its buttons are responsive.

The display isn't the brightest here, and it suffers from a slight blue tint when showing white areas. Above the display is a webcam for video chat, and a microphone by the keyboard picks up your voice to go with the pictures.

The VR600's speakers are louder and clearer than most here. Windows Vista Basic is installed as standard, and the 100GB hard disk is the smallest here.

At only 2.5kg the chassis is fairly light, and it has lots of useful ports. It's not the sturdiest notebook here, though, with some flexing and creaking when put under stress. Fortunately MSI provides a two-year warranty, the first year of which is an onsite service.

### PERFORMANCE

The VR600's Intel Core Duo T2350 has the highest clock speed of all the processors in the group, but in practice it was outperformed by the more modern Intel Core 2 Duo processors. Its score of 127 overall in our application benchmarks puts it in third place in this group.

Its battery life was less impressive, however. It was the only notebook in the group that failed to pass the two-hour mark in our light use test, so it's of very limited use when you're away from a power socket.

### VERDICT

The VR600 is fairly fast, with an impressive warranty and plenty of ports, but its keyboard is problematic and it has a small hard disk. Its battery is also terrible, so it's not a good buy.

### SUMMARY

- ✓ Fairly fast in applications
- ✓ Plenty of ports; long warranty
- ✗ Terrible battery; Windows Vista Basic

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core Duo T2350, 1GB RAM, 100GB disk, Intel Graphics Media Accelerator 950 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.5kg  
PART CODE 048UK  
SUPPLIER [www.cclonline.co.uk](http://www.cclonline.co.uk)  
DETAILS [www.msicomputer.co.uk](http://www.msicomputer.co.uk)



## PC NEXTDAY Zoostorm 52-4201



£499 inc VAT



PC Nextday's Zoostorm may not be much to look at, but it has an outstanding specification for such an inexpensive notebook.

### FEATURES

The Zoostorm is probably the blandest-looking notebook in the group, but it has a decent selection of ports, with four USB2 ports, a memory card reader and an ExpressCard/54 slot. There's also an optical S/PDIF output, so you can connect a surround-sound amplifier.

The 160GB hard disk provides plenty of space to hoard media files, and as the Zoostorm comes with Windows Vista Home Premium, you can browse them with Windows Media Center. The built-in speakers are poor, however, and sound tinny and distorted.

The display isn't very bright and white areas have a bluish tinge. Our greyscale test looked speckled, too. It's not a bad screen, but the Acer's is better. It's the only screen here with a matte finish, so it doesn't produce annoying reflections under office lights – but its colours aren't as deep as those on glossy displays.

### PERFORMANCE

The Zoostorm's Intel Core 2 Duo T7100 is one of the latest Core 2 chips, with a faster front-side bus than previous designs. Running at a fast 1.8GHz it produced an impressive overall score of 142 in our application benchmarks. It also includes Intel's new GMA X3100 graphics chipset. This couldn't run our 3D benchmark at the usual settings, but without anti-aliasing it scored 5.5fps. Unfortunately, it's still some way short of being able to run modern games.

The battery lasted a reasonable two and-a-half hours in our test. It'll suffice for use in the garden, but not for regular mobile use.

### VERDICT

The Zoostorm doesn't look exciting, but it's the most powerful notebook in the group and has no significant downsides.

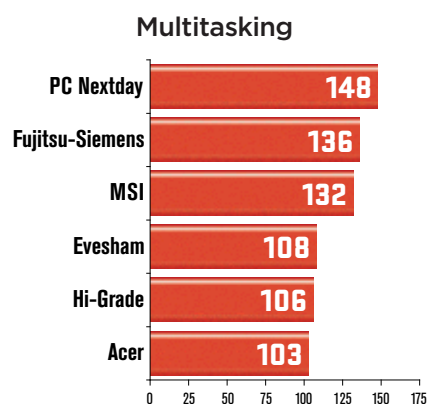
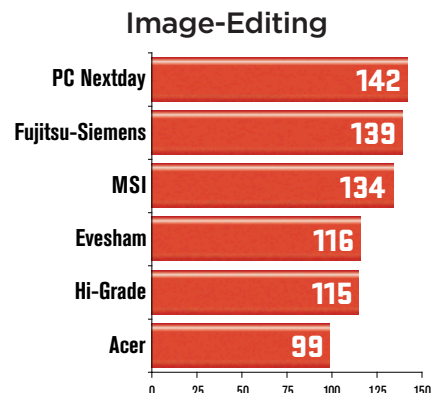
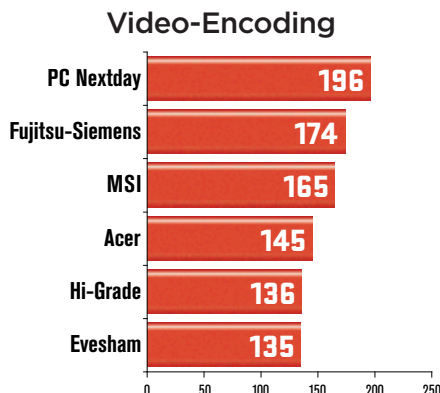
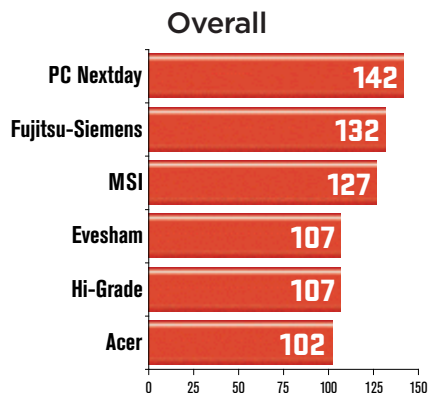
### SUMMARY

- ✓ Fast in applications
- ✓ Big hard disk
- ✗ Display could be brighter

GENERAL-PURPOSE NOTEBOOK Intel Core 2 Duo T7100, 1GB RAM, 160GB disk, Intel Graphics Media Accelerator X3100 graphics, DVD+/-RW +/-DL, 15.4in widescreen LCD, 2.7kg  
PART CODE 3352-4201  
SUPPLIER PC Nextday  
DETAILS [www.pcnextday.co.uk](http://www.pcnextday.co.uk)

## BENCHMARKS

## 2D Performance Shopper application tests



Computer Shopper's 2D benchmarks are designed to show how PCs stand up to the toughest tasks Windows can throw at them. Today's PCs have no problem running office applications such as Word and Excel, so we have chosen to focus our tests on areas where you could experience difficulties.

There are four scripts. Encoding a video to MPEG2 format is an extremely processor-intensive task that anyone interested in transferring home videos to DVD will have to tackle. Our image-editing test simulates a session of photo enhancement using Paint Shop Pro X, culminating with the composition of a panorama from a set of snaps. In our third test, a set of audio files is ripped to MP3 format. Finally, the multitasking benchmark

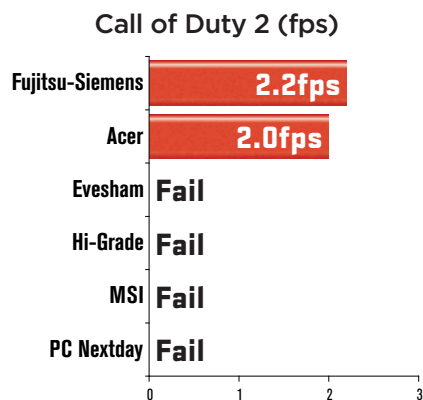


**SETTINGS** We run our application tests at the notebook's native resolution in 32-bit colour  
**WEB** [www.computershopper.co.uk](http://www.computershopper.co.uk)

tests the real-life benefits of Hyper-Threaded and dual-core processors. This test compresses a DVD for playback on a Pocket PC at the same time as running our image-editing test.

Figures are relative to a reference Evesham Athlon 64 3500+, which scores 100 in all tests.

## 3D Performance Call of Duty 2

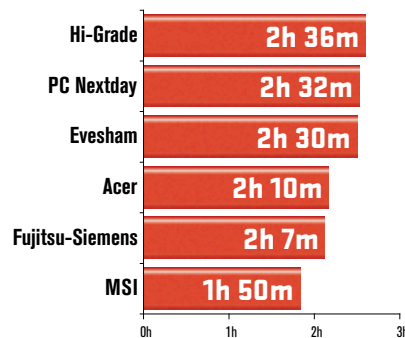


**SETTINGS**  
 1,024x768  
 resolution, high  
 quality, 4x AA  
**WEB** [www.futuremark.com](http://www.futuremark.com)

Call of Duty 2 uses DirectX and is one of the most demanding games available. With a wide range of effects and frenetic action, it tests every aspect of graphics performance.

A good score here indicates that a PC should cope with any graphically intense 3D game coming on to the market today.

## Battery life Run time



Our battery test involves light browser use with the display at its middle brightness setting.

## Labs verdict £500 notebooks

We were surprised to see that despite the low price, almost every notebook in this group had some kind of unique feature – even if it was simply a bright pink chassis. In the end, though, three notebooks stood out as good value, and one is an excellent buy.

Acer's TravelMate is a very well-equipped notebook with a good display. It has a pleasant keyboard and touch pad, plenty of ports and two expansion card slots. It's not particularly powerful, but it is the cheapest notebook in the group by quite a margin.

If you don't need to take on any tough computing tasks, it's a great choice.

If you would rather have something a little more powerful, Fujitsu Siemens' Amilo is a decent choice. It's fast in Windows applications and the only notebook here with a huge 2GB of memory, but if you want one you'll need to buy quickly before Tesco runs out of stock. In any case, it's not quite as impressive as the PC Nextday Zoostorm.

The Zoostorm is fitted with one of the latest Intel processors, as well as a large hard disk, and



has all the ports you'll need. It's the most powerful notebook here, just edging past the Amilo in our application benchmarks, and it has no significant flaws. At just £499 it's great value, and our Best Buy.



| MANUFACTURER                           | ACER                                                                                                                                                             | EVESHAM                                                                                                                                                            | FUJITSU<br>SIEMENS                                                                                                                                                | HI-GRADE                                                                                                                                                           | MSI                                                                                                                                                              | PC NEXTDAY                                                                                                                                |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Model</b>                           | <b>TravelMate<br/>5520-5A1G12</b>                                                                                                                                | <b>Voyager C350</b>                                                                                                                                                | <b>Amilo Li 1718</b>                                                                                                                                              | <b>Notino<br/>W5700P</b>                                                                                                                                           | <b>VR600-048UK</b>                                                                                                                                               | <b>Zoostorm<br/>52-4201</b>                                                                                                               |
| <b>Rating</b>                          | ★★★★                                                                                                                                                             | ★★★                                                                                                                                                                | ★★★★                                                                                                                                                              | ★★                                                                                                                                                                 | ★★★                                                                                                                                                              | ★★★★★                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Processor</b>                       | AMD Turion 64 X2<br>TK-53                                                                                                                                        | Intel Pentium Dual Core<br>T2080                                                                                                                                   | Intel Core 2 Duo T5300                                                                                                                                            | Intel Core Duo T2250                                                                                                                                               | Intel Core Duo T2350                                                                                                                                             | Intel Core 2 Duo T7100                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Speed</b>                           | 1.7GHz                                                                                                                                                           | 1.73GHz                                                                                                                                                            | 1.73GHz                                                                                                                                                           | 1.73GHz                                                                                                                                                            | 1.86GHz                                                                                                                                                          | 1.8GHz                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Memory installed</b>                | 1GB                                                                                                                                                              | 1GB                                                                                                                                                                | 2GB                                                                                                                                                               | 1GB                                                                                                                                                                | 1GB                                                                                                                                                              | 1GB                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Memory slots (free)</b>             | 2 (0)                                                                                                                                                            | 2 (0)                                                                                                                                                              | 2 (0)                                                                                                                                                             | 2 (0)                                                                                                                                                              | 2 (1)                                                                                                                                                            | 2 (0)                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Max memory</b>                      | 4GB                                                                                                                                                              | 2GB                                                                                                                                                                | 2GB                                                                                                                                                               | 2GB                                                                                                                                                                | 4GB                                                                                                                                                              | 4GB                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>BIOS</b>                            | Phoenix                                                                                                                                                          | Phoenix                                                                                                                                                            | Phoenix                                                                                                                                                           | FIC                                                                                                                                                                | AMI                                                                                                                                                              | Phoenix                                                                                                                                   |
| <b>Dimensions (HxWxD)</b>              | 43x360x267mm                                                                                                                                                     | 36x358x263mm                                                                                                                                                       | 31x355x255mm                                                                                                                                                      | 33x357x271mm                                                                                                                                                       | 30x358x259mm                                                                                                                                                     | 37x365x252mm                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Weight</b>                          | 2.9kg                                                                                                                                                            | 2.9kg                                                                                                                                                              | 2.7kg                                                                                                                                                             | 2.9kg                                                                                                                                                              | 2.5kg                                                                                                                                                            | 2.7kg                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Sound</b>                           | RealTek HD                                                                                                                                                       | RealTek HD                                                                                                                                                         | RealTek HD                                                                                                                                                        | VIA HD Audio                                                                                                                                                       | RealTek HD                                                                                                                                                       | RealTek HD                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Pointing device</b>                 | Touch pad                                                                                                                                                        | Touch pad                                                                                                                                                          | Touch pad                                                                                                                                                         | Touch pad                                                                                                                                                          | Touch pad                                                                                                                                                        | Touch pad                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>DISPLAY</b>                         |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Screen size</b>                     | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                                            | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                                              | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                                             | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                                              | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                                            | 15.4in widescreen LCD                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Graphics adaptor</b>                | ATI Mobility Radeon<br>X1250                                                                                                                                     | VIA Chrome9 HC IGP                                                                                                                                                 | ATI Radeon XPress<br>200M                                                                                                                                         | VIA Chrome9 HC IGP                                                                                                                                                 | Intel Graphics Media<br>Accelerator 950                                                                                                                          | Intel Graphics Media<br>Accelerator X3100                                                                                                 |
| <b>Graphics outputs</b>                | D-sub, S-video,<br>composite                                                                                                                                     | D-sub                                                                                                                                                              | D-sub                                                                                                                                                             | D-sub                                                                                                                                                              | D-sub, S-video,<br>composite                                                                                                                                     | D-sub                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Graphics memory</b>                 | 384MB shared                                                                                                                                                     | 256MB shared                                                                                                                                                       | 256MB shared                                                                                                                                                      | 178MB shared                                                                                                                                                       | 224MB shared                                                                                                                                                     | 384MB shared                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Native resolution</b>               | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                                        | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                                          | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                                         | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                                          | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                                        | 1,280x800                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>STORAGE</b>                         |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Hard disk (available)</b>           | 120GB (102GB)                                                                                                                                                    | 160GB (143GB)                                                                                                                                                      | 120GB (98GB)                                                                                                                                                      | 120GB (111GB)                                                                                                                                                      | 100GB (87GB)                                                                                                                                                     | 160GB (144GB)                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Optical drive</b>                   | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                                                   | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                                                     | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                                                    | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                                                     | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                                                   | DVD+/-RW +/-DL                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Optical drive speeds</b>            | LG GSA-T20N (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X<br>DVD+RW, 6X DVD-<br>RW, 4X DVD+R DL, 4X<br>DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-<br>RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) | TSST SN-S082H (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X<br>DVD+RW, 6X DVD-<br>RW, 6X DVD+R DL, 4X<br>DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-<br>RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) | NEC AD-7540A (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X<br>DVD+RW, 6X DVD-<br>RW, 4X DVD+R DL, 4X<br>DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-<br>RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) | TSST SN-S082D (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X<br>DVD+RW, 6X DVD-<br>RW, 6X DVD+R DL, 4X<br>DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-<br>RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) | LG GSA-T20N (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R, 8X<br>DVD+RW, 6X DVD-<br>RW, 4X DVD+R DL, 4X<br>DVD-R DL, 5X DVD-<br>RAM, 24X CD-R, 24X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) | Matshita UJ-850S (8X<br>DVD+R, 8X DVD-R,<br>6X DVD+RW, 6X<br>DVD-RW, 2.4X DVD+R<br>DL, 24X CD-R, 10X<br>CD-RW, 8X DVD-ROM,<br>24X CD-ROM) |
| <b>PORTS AND EXPANSION</b>             |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>USB2 ports</b>                      | 4                                                                                                                                                                | 4                                                                                                                                                                  | 4                                                                                                                                                                 | 3                                                                                                                                                                  | 4                                                                                                                                                                | 4                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>FireWire</b>                        | 1                                                                                                                                                                | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | 1                                                                                                                                                                | None                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Infrared port</b>                   | Yes                                                                                                                                                              | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                                | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Bluetooth</b>                       | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                                | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Networking</b>                      | 10/100/1,000,<br>802.11a/b/g                                                                                                                                     | 10/100, 802.11b/g                                                                                                                                                  | 10/100, 802.11b/g                                                                                                                                                 | 10/100, 802.11b/g                                                                                                                                                  | 10/100/1,000,<br>802.11b/g                                                                                                                                       | 10/100, 802.11a/b/g                                                                                                                       |
| <b>PC card slots</b>                   | 1x ExpressCard/54, 1x<br>CardBus                                                                                                                                 | 1x ExpressCard/54                                                                                                                                                  | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | 1x CardBus                                                                                                                                                       | 1x ExpressCard/54                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Modem</b>                           | Yes                                                                                                                                                              | Yes                                                                                                                                                                | Yes                                                                                                                                                               | Yes                                                                                                                                                                | Yes                                                                                                                                                              | Yes                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Legacy ports</b>                    | None                                                                                                                                                             | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                             | None                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Memory card reader</b>              | Secure Digital,<br>MultiMedia Card,<br>Memory Stick Pro, xD                                                                                                      | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | Secure Digital,<br>MultiMedia Card,<br>Memory Stick                                                                                                              | Secure Digital,<br>MultiMedia Card,<br>Memory Stick Pro                                                                                   |
| <b>Other ports</b>                     | None                                                                                                                                                             | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                             | Optical S/PDIF                                                                                                                            |
| <b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>                   |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Carrying case</b>                   | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                                | Yes                                                                                                                                                                | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Direct CD control</b>               | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                                | No                                                                                                                                                                 | No                                                                                                                                                               | No                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Operating system</b>                | Windows Vista<br>Home Premium                                                                                                                                    | Windows Vista<br>Home Basic                                                                                                                                        | Windows Vista<br>Home Premium                                                                                                                                     | Windows Vista<br>Home Basic                                                                                                                                        | Windows Vista<br>Home Basic                                                                                                                                      | Windows Vista<br>Home Premium                                                                                                             |
| <b>Operating system restore option</b> | Restore partition                                                                                                                                                | Restore partition                                                                                                                                                  | Restore partition,<br>restore disc                                                                                                                                | Windows disc                                                                                                                                                       | Restore partition                                                                                                                                                | Restore partition                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Software included</b>               | NTI CD Maker 7,<br>NTI Shadow                                                                                                                                    | Microsoft Works 8.5,<br>Roxio DVD Creator<br>9, BullGuard Internet<br>Security 7                                                                                   | Microsoft Works 8.5,<br>WinDVD 8 FSC, Nero<br>Essentials 7                                                                                                        | Ahead Nero 7                                                                                                                                                       | Microsoft Works 8.5,<br>CyberLink PowerDVD<br>7, Power2Go 5,<br>PowerProducer 3,<br>PowerDirector Express<br>5, PowerStarter 4                                   | Ahead Nero OEM 7                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Other standard accessories</b>      | Built-in 1.3-megapixel<br>webcam                                                                                                                                 | None                                                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | None                                                                                                                                                               | Built-in 1.3-megapixel<br>webcam                                                                                                                                 | None                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Optional extras (inc VAT)</b>       | None                                                                                                                                                             | Upgrade to 2GB of<br>RAM £42 inc VAT                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                              | Upgrade to 2GB of<br>RAM £82 inc VAT                                                                                                                               | None                                                                                                                                                             | Upgrade to 2GB of<br>RAM £29 inc VAT                                                                                                      |
| <b>BUYING INFORMATION</b>              |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Company founded</b>                 | 1979                                                                                                                                                             | 1983                                                                                                                                                               | 1999                                                                                                                                                              | 1986                                                                                                                                                               | 1986                                                                                                                                                             | 1993                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Employees</b>                       | 6,000                                                                                                                                                            | 314                                                                                                                                                                | 10,700                                                                                                                                                            | 70                                                                                                                                                                 | 25 UK based                                                                                                                                                      | 75                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Tech support staff</b>              | 150+                                                                                                                                                             | 82                                                                                                                                                                 | 50                                                                                                                                                                | 8                                                                                                                                                                  | 6 UK based                                                                                                                                                       | 24                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>Tech support times</b>              | 9am-5pm Mon-Fri                                                                                                                                                  | 9am-5.30pm Mon-Sat                                                                                                                                                 | 9am-8pm Mon-Fri,<br>10am-4pm Sat                                                                                                                                  | 9am-5.30pm Mon-Fri                                                                                                                                                 | 9am-5pm Mon-Fri                                                                                                                                                  | 9am-6pm Mon-Fri                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Parts and labour warranty</b>       | One year RTB                                                                                                                                                     | One year onsite                                                                                                                                                    | One year RTB                                                                                                                                                      | One year RTB                                                                                                                                                       | One year onsite, second<br>year RTB                                                                                                                              | One year RTB                                                                                                                              |
| <b>Price inc VAT</b>                   | £453                                                                                                                                                             | £499                                                                                                                                                               | £499                                                                                                                                                              | £499                                                                                                                                                               | £492                                                                                                                                                             | £499                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Price ex VAT</b>                    | £385                                                                                                                                                             | £425                                                                                                                                                               | £425                                                                                                                                                              | £425                                                                                                                                                               | £419                                                                                                                                                             | £425                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Details</b>                         | www.acer.co.uk                                                                                                                                                   | www.evesham.com                                                                                                                                                    | www.fujitsu-siemens.<br>co.uk                                                                                                                                     | www.higrade.com                                                                                                                                                    | www.msicomputer.<br>co.uk                                                                                                                                        | www.pcnextday.co.uk                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Supplier</b>                        | www.technoworld.com                                                                                                                                              | Evesham 08701<br>609500                                                                                                                                            | Tesco 0845 600 4411                                                                                                                                               | Hi-Grade 020 8532<br>6112                                                                                                                                          | www.cclonline.co.uk                                                                                                                                              | PC Nextday                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Part number</b>                     | LX.TKTOX.025                                                                                                                                                     | VOYC350AUG07                                                                                                                                                       | CUZ:N-GBR-VARIO016                                                                                                                                                | VA250D                                                                                                                                                             | 048UK                                                                                                                                                            | 3352-4201                                                                                                                                 |